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Spring 2-1-2019

JRNL 494.03: Pollner Seminar - Intimacy and Long-Form Documentary Photography

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Spring 2019 Pollner Seminar, University of Montana
Intimacy and Long-form Documentary Photography JRNL 494
Monday and Wednesday 12:30 —1:50, Don Anderson Hall, Room 210

Preston Gannaway

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office DAH 429, 406-243-2256, 10:00-12:00 M+W (or anytime by appointment)

You can also often find me next door at the Kaimin

COURSE DESCRIPTION

“Journalism of everyday life will help repair a torn social fabric that journalism and other factors have helped to create.” - Walt Harrington

This course will guide you through the process of creating and publishing a substantial, in-depth documentary project. We will study multiple approaches to storytelling and students will be encouraged to explore various mediums: still photography, audio, motion, text (first-person and third-person), found and historical material. We will examine work with an emphasis on contemporary American documentary photography, drawing from both the journalism and fine art fields.

Students are required to complete a single semester long project that will be due in April. Periodic critiques and edits will be turned in for review throughout the semester, including a mid-term review of the progress. In addition to this long-term (“big”) project, students will be assigned a few additional shooting and research projects throughout the course.

Throughout the semester, we will focus on the art of building relationships as these are fundamental to intimate journalism and bringing finished pieces to publication. We will learn how to develop collaborative relationships with the people whose stories we help tell and build the rapport necessary to yield insightful and sensitive pieces.

This seminar will be challenging and evolve based on students’ abilities and interests. Classes will be discussion heavy. This syllabus is our road map, but please expect detours. Sometimes those are where we find the best stories.

Through all of this, we will as much as possible, hone skills that you will use throughout life, no matter what you decide to do.

OUTCOMES

- Learn to conceive, plan, develop and complete a long-form project.
- Create nuanced stories that inspire understanding and compassion.
- Develop an appreciation of image meaning, sequencing and narrative photography.
- Become better prepared for the current and future state of media by mastering multiple communication tools.
- Analyze the ethical issues of visual journalism.
- Critically evaluate your own work and that of others for accuracy, fairness, clarity and political, economic, cultural, racial and gender understanding.
- Become proficient at pitching stories and communicating with editors.

- Gain real world knowledge about business practices as a professional photographer.

Assignment #1 — Strangers (due Jan. 28)

Assignment #2 — Little Project (due Feb. 11)

Assignment #3 — Pitches (due Feb. 21)

Assignment #4 — TBD something fun and mind stretchy... poem or playbook?

Assignment #5 — mid Big Project critique (due March 18)

Big Project — Must incorporate at least two forms of media (due April 18)

GRADING will be based on point allocation

50% for Participation/Assignments (participation and engagement in class will affect point total for assignments.) Up to 10 points for each of 5 Assignments (which includes one mid Big Proj crit)

50% for Big Project

A	93 to 100	C	73 to 77
A –	90 to 92	C –	70 to 72
B+	88 to 89	D+	68 to 69
B	83 to 87	D	63 to 67
B –	80 to 82	D –	60 to 62
C +	78 to 79	F	59 and below

While the Big Project is a major part of your grade, class participation is arguably a larger part, as it has significant influence on each component of your grade. Being physically present in class goes without saying. What I will be looking for is an eagerness to learn and an overall engagement — with the lessons, your own work and your classmates' work. To the best of my ability, I will assess this both in and outside of class over the course of the semester.

Please email at least one hour in advance of class if you are unable to attend. *Three or more unexcused absences will result in a 10 point deduction (one letter grade) in your final assessment.*

Deadlines are a fact of life and can be a gift when it comes to focusing our mind and time. As individual journalists, our deadlines are a crucial part of the overall system. Don't be late. There will be few allowable excuses for a late assignment and each day late will result in a 10% (1 point for assignments) deduction.

As we will learn, it is much harder to develop a personal relationship with a large group as opposed to an individual. In order for you and I to build the rapport that will make learning more effective, we will have to occasionally meet outside of class. Details forthcoming, but you will each be encouraged (and also required) to meet with me during office hours.

READINGS

The Mind's Eye, by Henri Cartier-Bresson

Introduction, The New Kings of Non Fiction, by Ira Glass

"A Writer's Essay," Intimate Journalism: The Art and Craft of Reporting Everyday Life, by Walt Harrington

"The American Man, Age 10" by Susan Orlean

"Open Door," A Field Guide to Getting Lost, by Rebecca Solnit

"The Foot Solider of Birmingham," Revisionist History 2.4, Malcolm Gladwell

Episodes 1, 3, 5, WriteLane (Lane DeGregory podcast), Tampa Bay Times

... and more!

EQUIPMENT

As this is an upper level course, I expect proficiency with your primary storytelling medium. You will be using techniques that may be new to you, but this class focuses on storytelling and relationships — it will not be a technical class. I will expect you to make every effort to work with your classmates and outside resources to resolve technical issues ahead of time.

There will be equipment available to check out. If you have not already, please fill out the equipment checkout contract. I have copies here. You should also have an after-hours building access form completed.

ETHICS and ETIQUETTE

All students are expected to participate in class discussions and critiques with comments and questions. Everyone's opinion is valid and all discussions will be open and also respectful.

Please no cell phone use during any point in class. It is especially disrespectful when we have guests and therefore I won't tolerate it.

The university is committed to making this course accessible to students with disabilities. Please see me if you have disabilities and need to request reasonable course modifications. [Disability Services for Students](#) will be able to assist us in the accommodation process.

Academic honesty is imperative. All students must adhere to the [Student Conduct Code](#). This includes an understanding and acknowledgment to avoid plagiarism as well as submitting work that has been done for another class.

Truth and transparency are our key currencies. Even though we may study work that does, *there will be no manufacturing or staging moments in this class*. Altering images beyond industry standards is also unacceptable. If you intentionally mislead your audience, you will fail the course. Please bring up any concerns or questions ahead of time.

**SCHEDULE

Part 1 Who are we, where are we going?

M 1/14 syllabus, map of influences

W 1/16 your work + someone else's in 3 minutes or less

M 1/21 (no class)

W 1/23 "Touching Strangers" by Richard Renaldi

M 1/28 **Assignment #1 Due**

story development with your partner

Part 2 What is a good story?

W 1/30 place, "Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea"

M 2/4 The New Kings of Non Fiction, by Ira Glass

W 2/6 details, "The American Man, Age 10" by Susan Orlean

M 2/11 **Little Project Due (Assignment #2)** (critiques)

W 2/13 **critiques** continued, mid semester survey

M 2/18 (no class)

W 2/20 Pitches!

Th 2/21 **Assignment #3 Due** (not a class day)

Part 3 Building relationships

M 2/25 empathy

W 2/27 editors

M 3/4 one-on-one reviews

Part 4 Ethics, surprises and tropes

W 3/6 “Open Door,” by Rebecca Solnit

M 3/11 battling stereotypes, collaborating with subjects

W 3/13 “The Foot Solider of Birmingham,” Malcolm Gladwell

M 3/18 Big Project check-in (critiques)

W 3/20 **critiques** continued

M 3/25 (no class - spring break)

W 3/27 (no class - spring break)

Part 5 Sequence and story structure

M 4/1 shot lists

W 4/3 sequencing a photo story

M 4/8 video

W 4/10 one ESPN story in 3 and 1/2 forms

Part 6 Where your work can live (and how to keep it alive)

M 4/15 newspapers, contracts and releases

W 4/17 meetings, networking and reviews
books, exhibitions

Th 4/18 **Final Project Due** (not a class day)

M 4/22 **critiques**

W 4/24 **critiques** continued, tearful goodbyes

GUESTS and RESOURCES

<http://imagedeconstructed.com/>

<https://www.nytimes.com/section/lens>

<https://www.newyorker.com/culture/photo-booth>

<https://30of30.eddieadamsworkshop.com>

<https://theoneswelove.net/>

<http://theheavycollective.com/>

****Skypes with friends**

<http://www.matteichphoto.com>

<http://www.jamierose.net>

<http://rossmantle.com/>

<http://www.ashadamsphoto.com/>

<http://maddiemcgarvey.com/>

<http://jaredsoares.com/>

<http://andresgonzalezphoto.com/>

<https://scottstrazzante.photoshelter.com/index>

<http://lisakrantz.com/>

<http://www.zora-murff.com/>

and an editor or two as well!

HOW TO SUCCEED

Time management is key. Juggling multiple deadlines and responsibilities is one of life's great challenges. In the real world, being present and working hard usually trumps talent. My goal is to help you build the skills to succeed in this class and beyond. Please remember that I am here to help you and don't be afraid to come talk to me.

If you demonstrate substantial growth, willingness for feedback and a strong time commitment to the assignments, this will show in your final grade.

****Please note** This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor, based on the needs of the class and events through the semester. All effort will be made to have any deadline changes work in your favor.

Skype visitors will be schedule dependent. If you're especially interested in one of these folks, let me know!

One last copy-and-paste because everyone needs a mission:

The mission of The University of Montana School of Journalism is to provide students with a professional education in journalism; to teach them to think critically, act ethically, and communicate effectively; to help them understand the challenges and changes in the news media; and to inspire them to use their talents to improve journalism and enhance a diverse and democratic society.